Ammement, then, is not merely defonsible. The want of it is a calamity, and an injury to the sober and solid interests of society. None are more truly interested—did they know their own duty and policy—is seeing the community properly amused than the organized friends of merality and piety. They ought to know that Nature avenges herself sooner or laterand better sooner than later—for the violation of the laws of physical and moral health; and that the suppression of the snorting careless and pleasure-craving

and better sooner than later—for the violation of the have of physical and moral health; and that the suppression of the sportive, careless and pleasure-craving propensities or aptitudes of our nature, involves an inevitable derangement and sure decay of the higher expanse and facultife. Instead, therefore, of interfering with business, duty, sobriety, piety—with scholarship, virtue, and reverence—amusement, viewed scoonemy, virtue, and reverence—amusement, viewed merely as a principle, advances and supports them all.

The mtellect that plays a part of every day, works more powerfully and to better results for the rest of the time; the heart that is gay for an hour, is more serious for the other hours of the day; the conscience that reposes for a space is more active when it wakes; the will that rests is more vigorous than the will that is always strained.

Tou see, then, that I put amusement among the necessaries and not the luxuries of life. Like sugar, which was long thought a mere palate-pleaser, but which now turnsout to be an indispensable constituent of the blood, and one of the most nourishing and necessary articles of human food, amusement is a serious, practical interest and concern of society, and net a mere indulgence and weakness, to be exensed and apologized for. Society is the better, the safer, the more moral and religious, for amusement. It is as good a friend to the church as it is to the theater; to seand morals and unsuperstitious piety, as it is to health and happiness. The very word recreation carries its argument in its etymology. To recreate is to re-create, and pleasure and piety have, in this direction, an identical aim—to renew and edify our nature. Amusement, it is true, recreates in a very different manner from piety. It does not make the bone and sinew, but supplies the roundness of the muscle, the fat and moisture of the system—and while one gives drength and size, the other gives flexibility, case and grace. Both are necessary to build up the perfect man. Both are necessary to build up the perfect

But here I shall be met with the suggestion that, allowing all this, amusement, falling in with the tastes, the sloth, the self-indulgent propensities of humanity—being in its very nature easy, careless and gay—tends always to excess; provides amply and extravagantly for its own gratification, is in league with the vanity, vices, and dangerous passions of the human heart; and, instead of countenance and encouragement from the serious class, needs only its rebuke and restraint. Nay, that the very object of religion is to produce a seriousness, self-denial and consecration which pleasure in every form assails and renders difficult; that it attaches to the world; produces giddiness where religion would give sobriety, and promotes self-forgetfulness and indifference in those whom God's word is seeking to make thoughtful and anxious. Many good and wise people, who have not the least idea of seeing amusement go out of fashion, and who would coning amusement go out of fashion, and who would con fees that what they themselves call innocent amuse ment is necessary and legitimate; who look at the

fees that what they themselves call innocent amusement is necessary and legitimate; who look at the sports of young chidren—the game at ball, or the stater's flight, the walk in the country, the nutting party, a game at chequers or chess, the music of the plane, the wit and humor of a true story—with sympathy, nevertheless think it their duty to resist the principle of annusement, lest, under any concession of its lewfulness, excess should find shelter.

There is, however, no greater mistake in the world than to imagine that, taking society together, the love of amusement is an overweening passion of humanity. Doubtiess it is the ruin of a class. But selfishness, the root of depravity, and the mother of human evils, finds its chief outlets and manifestations in the serious and anxious passions of men—in cupidity, the love of power, envy, jealousy and malice. Out of the grand desire to appropriate wealth, power, place, or to avoid want, submission and injury, spring the worst characteristics of society. Falschood, fraud, violence, anger, cunning, slander, meanness, apathy, vice and crime, originate in selfishness, which is ordinarily unsocial, stern, sober, laborious, and far as possible from pleasmer or diversion. Instead of being self-forgetful, disposed to relaxation, playful or gay, it is sullen, introspective, tightly girded, and in no mood for delight. For certainly we must not confound things different, and call the grim satisfaction with which the miser pursues his gains, the tyrant his victims, the rogue his prize, with which envy surveys the mortification of a competitor, or hatred the misfortune of an enemy, or jealousy the pangs of a rival—anusemont.

Nor are the vices of society, drunkenness, lust and gambling, to be placed among the relaxations and

prayed and Satanic affection! What but moral confu-sion, secret protest, insidious revenges, private vices, latent skepticism, and laxity in directions not open to observation or suspicion, can result to many, from such unwarranted and unnatural classifications? It is true the second generation often pays the penalty of the asceticism of the feat that the penalty of true the second generation often pays the penalty the asceticism of the first, but the first usually has the asceticism of the first, but the first usually has a ruinous pity on itself, and treats its resolution in dark and deadly ways. We cannot afford to waste our moral feeling, our sensibility to sin, our powers of self-control and of resistance, upon false issues or on artificial sins. We want all the tenderuess and all the energy of conscience—all, the amenableness to duty, all the fear of God we have or can calityate, wherewith to encounter real sins, the actual temptations of the devil, the positive wrongs to which human life and character are exposed. Every artificial wrong, everything pronounced evil which is innocent, every restraint volunteered, every self-denial which is unnecessary, is a positive weakening of our moral forces—ammunition used up in a sham fight, when the real enemy is just at our doors. It is no uncommon thing, therefore, to see acceticism accompanied by cruelty to others, sanctimoniousness associated with sourness of heart, and separateness from the world, or disguet and contempt for its pleasures, offset with spiritual pride, harshees of judgment and malignity of temper.

It will not answer, then, for the religious class to

harshness of judgment and malignity of temper.

It will not answer, then, for the religious class to hold amusements or pleasures responsible for that depravity of manners and insensibility of coascience and heart which they so justly deplore. They had much better attack the egotism, pride, covetousness, indolence, appetite, the vehement passions, and desires of men, in directions and at points where the natural conscience and the grace of God will assist and sustain their onset. It is not in the amusements, but in the serious occupations of society; in business, domestic cares and collisions, rivalries and competitions of interest, conflicts and strifes of feeling, in bursts of passion, or secret, unsocial vices, that reverence, obedision, or secret, usscrial vices, that reverence, obodi-ence, the love of truth, and virtue, and fied, are lost. Nor has morality or religion any business to indulge its own laxiness and lack of discrimination by denouncing in the gross what has a mixture of good and evil in it; or to affect from policy, a disapprobation of the prin-ciple of amusement, when it only at heart condemns certain kinds and degrees of it. Such want of frank-

certain kinds and degrees of it. Such want of franknees and truth involves the proper censors of manners
in suspicion and contempt, and finally puts the recreation of the world, where unhappily much of it now is,
in open defiance of piety, or disgust for the church.

I am not here to deny or conceal the exposure to excess, and actual lapse of the young into excess, in the
leve and pursuit of pleasure. The moment it becomes
anything more than a relaxation from toil—the unbending of a bow kept ordinarily at its strain, the exception
and not the rule, the leisure of the busy, the fun of the
serious, the play of the worker, the self-forgetfulness
of the thoughtful, the recreation of the weary and
exhausted—it is in excess. But things are not to be
abandoned because their use requires judgment and
self-control. The best things are most spen to abuse,
and amusement, like food, love, power, money, requires and amusement, like food, love, power, money, requires to have the dangers of its pursuit pointed out, but not its lawfulness or its innocency, in its place and degree,

denied or concealed.

It being established, then, that amnsement is not a thing to be afraid of; that it is a good and not an evil, a necessity and not a luxury of civilization; an interset of society, which the religious class, instead of re-

garding with hostility and jackery, sught to encourage and direct, I can again to inquire, what pince the etage has among the amountment of society, and what ittles it has to the countenance of serious people.

I suppose it would not for a moment be desired that, if the theater were compatible with Christian sobriety, it would be the most complete and interesting of all amusements. Nothing but scruples of conscience and a fear of countenancing a seductive pleasure keeps even the most sober portions of the commonity from an occas onal visit to the play-house. I must except, of course, those who, by thence of their sensibility to pleasure, have lost the power of being amused, and those whose original temperament is constitutionally averse to pleasure. But those, few or many, must not mistake their defects for advantages. It is a much greater misfortune not to have the ordinary taste for amusement than it is not to have the ordinary ear for music. That must be a simple nature that does not powerfully feel the attractiveness of the stage when occupied by such persona as Garrick, Taina and the Kembies; and, purified from what must offend the taste or conscience of good men, the stage, filled with moderately good performers, would aliure and gratify thousands of sober and discreet people, as nothing else could. The indifferent performances of amust are listened to with an intense gratification, which, after deducting all the interest of personal sympathy with the volunteers, demonstrates the inherent charm of the stage. There was never a dialogue spoken in a school exhibition which was not ten times as exciting as any monologue, and every additional person added to the scene increased tits fuscination in a geometrical ratio. If a few rags of scenery or costume were thrown around which was not ten times as exciting as any monologue, and every additional person added to the scene increased its fascination in a geometrical ratio. If a few rags of scenery or costume were thrown around the performers, how potently was the charmen enhanced! In short, in precise proportion to an approach to the public stage was the amusement complete. But why linger on so plain a point? The stage is the most winning of amusements, because the combination and aggregate of all others. The theater is itself a magnificent place—the audience a great party in becoming attire. If there were nothing behind the curtain, an elegant room, brilliantly lighted, with graceful tiers of galleries, full of well-dressed people in good humor, and seated in knots of acquaintances, talking, bowing, or gazing, admiring and being admired, would be fascinating to the social and esthetic instincts of human beings. But there is more than this, even outside the curtain. A great orchestra of music, capable, by its own unaided powers, of delighting an audience. Beside a social party, a grand concert, and the curtain not yet risen! But the curtain rises and displays—what? A gifted person, reading an eloquent aggretic or a neddious noem in a highly cultivated Beside & social party, a grand concert, and the unit min not yet rises! But the curtain rises and displays—what I A gifted person, reading an eloquent narrative, or a melodious poem, in a highly cultivated voice? That indeed would be a high pleasure, such as we sometimes eagerly seek elsewhere. No! but a whole company of persons, especially endowed by nature for the occupation and trained to its practice, engaged in representing some historical or fictitious story, carefully, and, by high and rare genius, wrought to a moving plot, in which each scene and act helps on a conclusion—where the passions, weaknesses, virtues and complicated motives of humanity, seized in their most affecting and interesting aspects, are not described, but actually represented by persons of talent and skill, carefully cooperating to one grand result? The time of the drama may be a thousand years back, the place five thousand miles off; but the costumes and scenery, with learned artistic care, reproduce what history and art have taught them, and we behold what a little exercise of the imagination makes the history and art have taught them, and we behold what a little exercise of the imagination makes the very action, the persons, country, town and eastle the dramatist has summoned us to see! Can we wonder that an imitation of life itself, in its rarest, most passionate, and heart-moving moments and experiences—where the alchemy of genius and art fuses into a few hours the whole conduct and course of a splendid human career—a deep domestic calamity, ambition's bloody road to a throne, love's great sacrifice, is glousy's toturing fears, avariee's pinching and splendid human career—a deep domestic calamity, ambition's bloody road to a throne, love's great sacrifice, jealousy's torturing fears, avarice's pinching and grasping way—Hamlet's thought-palsied melancholy. Lear's frenzied paternal grief, Juliet's innocent passion. Macbeth's remorse—that a pleasure so rich, costly, variously and curiously compounded as this, based upon the fleepest, most numerous sensibilities of our nature, should prove universally and permanently attractive? The drama condenses what is most intensely interesting or affecting in real life, or what from the constitution of our nature genius knows might be real life, into a compact, rounded and finished story, omitting what is common-place, irrelevant, or simply painful, and by careful adherence to the great rule of art, which never forgets that its end is pleasure, extracting from crime, or vice, or passion whatever in their actual occurrence it would shock us to behold, leaves what moves our passions and affections with pleasing though tearful sensibility. The stage takes this drama, and by a living sculpture clothes this wondrous work of literary genius with flesh and blood, substitutes for paper and print, men and women, voices for words, for the dull pictures of the imagination, actual scenery; for descriptions of costume, elaborate dresses; nay, it invokes gifted men and yet more gifted women to take these places, and with boundless study, consideration, expense, builds the temple, collects the properties, and arranges the scene which is to convert the written into the acted drama' and is it possible to conceive that human ingenuity can ever invent any other amusement which can equal, much less exceed, this deeply-founded, slowly-wrought, and most costly contrivance for the public delight and recreation of human beings? Supposing it to be innecent, I perceive no element wanting to reader it theoretically a perfect pleasure. It appeals to the intellect, the imagination, the heart, the senses. It has the charm of poetry and music. It unite prize, with which eavy surveys the mortification of a competitor, or harred the misfortune of an enemy, or judiciously the pangs of a rival—amusement.

Nor are the vices of society, drunkenness, lust and gambling, to be placed among the relaxations and anusements of mankind. They are the serious and horrible outbreak of lawless appetites, which do nothing to recreate, but only to destroy. If they are often found in connection with the pleasures of the world, they are just as often found in absolute separation from them. Indeed, the lack of the wholesome excitement of pleasure is commonly seen producing the notions excitement of vice; and intemperance, lust and gambling, have devastated communities in which public diversions have been scrupulously forbidden. It is a terrible fact, that the first hundred years of Puritains in New-England was marked alike by assectic public manners, and the prevalence of vices almost unleard of in our free and more indulgent society; and it is even now asserted that the soberest of our sister States contributes more than any other State in the Union to the sed catalogue of tende frailty.

There is hardly a more baleful error in the world than that which has produced the feud botween morality and amusement, piety and pleasure. By presenting and the prevalung affections into opposition to absolute wrong and depraving affections into opposition to things innoceat, indifferent, or hurtful only in excess; and thus a very mischievous confusion has been introduced into the natural and the Christian connecioned of evil. Consider the thick darkness, the absence of evil. Consider the thick darkness, the absence of evil. Consider the thick darkness, the absence of evil, and moral order, which is likely to reign lan a soul that has been instructed to put dancing, and the frequentations of shows, spectacles and balls into the natural order, which is likely to reign lan as only the produced the feed between the land of the evil than

that we teel for the genus sentable; and Shakespeare, Hamlet, and Garrick, all pull at our heart-strings in one delicious moment of admiration and sympathy. Poetry, inventiou, story, nimetic talent, elocution, porsonation, spectacle, beauty, passion, architecture, painting, music, society, light, all combine in the theater to make it the most brilliant, complete, and untiring of public amassements. Now I am not pretending, you perceive, that the charm or attractiveness of the stage depends firstly and mainly upon its moral teaching, or its moral influence. Amusement loses its quality when instruction becomes its object, and it would be very delusive to anticipate that people would attend the theater for educational purposes, or cease to attend it because it were proved uninstructive. The instruction to be got from the drama or the stage must always be incidental, and perfectly subordinate to the pleasure got from were proved uninstructive. The instruction to be got from the drama or the stage must always be incidental, and perfectly subordinate to the pleasure got from them. I do not doubt that there is potent instruction and moral influence in Hamlet, Macbeth, the Tempoet, the Gamester, the Hunchback, Uncle Tom's Cabin, the Rent Day; but if the satisfaction and pleasure of seeing those plays depended upon their moral influence, or if their performance could be justified only by their direct usefulness to morals, I fear I should lose my case with the serious class. Considering the moral necessity of being happy, it is the various, whole-some and immense amount of pleasure and recreation which the theater gives that first enlists me in its support. It annuses so large a part of our humanity, amuses the senses and the soul. It calls out to gratify and refresh them, sensibilities and passions, which the ordinary life of the world does not bring into play, and thus rests the other and carnest powers and feelings of our nature. Removing us from the region of the actual to that of the ideal; from the sphere of the common and natural into that of the extraordinary and artistic, it changes our world and ourselves, draws upon an entirely new set of powers and sensibilities, while it allows the old set to go to sleep, and thus to repair their waste, while the circle of our development is completing. All amusement does this, and the theater only more, because it is the most anusing of amusements. It rests and recreates by callier into more provided into more pleasing and intense activity the this, and the theater only more, because it is the most amusing of amusements. It rests and recreates by calling into more pleasing and intense activity the qualities, affections, emotions, ordinarily dormant in the work-day life of society. There, instead of minis-tering we are ministered unto; instead of acting we are acted for; instead of planning and scheming we are watching plans and schemes; instead of feeling for curselves we are feeling for others; in-tead of toiling after a distant consumnation we are enjoying a conwatching pass and schemes; instead of technic for cursives we are feeling for others; instead of teiling after a distant consummation we are enjoying a consummation which is perfected in five acts. Our love of beauty, harmony, heroism; our sympathy with daring, patrictism, passion; our love of light, form, color, elegance, sple ndor; our admiration for genius, talent, skill, all these sensibilities, which in actual, plodding life, mercantile, domestic, or professional, get little exercise or indulgence, are in the theater ministered to, and gratified in a way which recreates our common nature.

The use of the theater isupposing it free from moral objection, which I by no means assume, is that it gives so much pleasure, which is a positive and large addition to the general sum of human happiness; and that in giving this pleasure, it satisfies an immense need of recreation, and, quite independently of any direct influence on the moral interests of society, builds up, and supports, and cheers the life and soul of man. I dare not make light of pleasure. God has taken too benevolent an interest in producing it, and there is too much pain, and drudgery, and necessary care to be offset by it, to allow me to think it a small thing that any considerable mass of human beings are pleased. I will not demand of amusement that it shall directly instruct, ware, elevate, or improve. If it give genuine pleasure, and if it do not corrupt, deprave, or injure, I will bless it, and without a single misgiving invoke the benediction of Heaven on its head. Do not, then, perversely read backward all that has been said of the fascination of the theater, as if it were so much against it, and not so much in its favor. If it shall afterward appear that the stage has essential immoralities and perils to society and the soul, wrought into its very nature, and inseparable from it, then we The use of the theater (supposing it free from moral

and that genine, art, beauty, and splendor, have pired, in the theater, to make vice sechetive, and the r.; and mar general art, to make vice seductive, and felly captivating. Put I sabmit, that in the theory of the stage to very different thing, possibly, from the fact), we have yet found acthing to condemn—nothing escentially wrong, or otherwise than right. There is rothing wrong in amusement, except in excess; nor in the theater, the finest of amusements. The dramatic faculty is divinely implanted. It gives life and reality even to portions of the Scripturea. The drama is a species of literature which the world's greatest geniness have chosen for their ewn, gaining immortal random for their labors there. The stage is the drama is also never real, and brought within the easier and fuller enjoyment of the best and the poorest judges. So far we are in smooth water.

But the breakers begin to threaten us at the very next step.

But the breakers begin to threaten us at the very next step.

It is alleged, and that is in professed sentiment of the serious class, that practically the drama has been a corrupt and corrupting kind of literature, putting into licentious and depraying verse and story the worst and most seductive experiences of humanity; that it has pandered to vile and vulgar tastes, dramatists having often or asually been loose and unprincipled characters, and their readers the more gay and careless portion of society. Doubtless there is truth, and there is also exaggeration in this statement. The great dramatists, whether ancient or modern, Sophocles, Euripides, or Aristophanes, Calderon, Lope de Vega, Corneille, Racine, Shakespeare, are, with the exception of the coarseness which belonged to their respective ages, not open to such charges, although the minor lights unquestionably deserve severe chastisement. of the coarseness which belonged to their respective ages, not open to such charges, although the minor lights unquestionably deserve severe chastisement. But there is nothing peculiar in the abuse of dramatic literature. We do not abandon and discountenance poetry because Rochester wrote immoral verses, and Moore and Byron, poems which nobody should read. We do not give up Richardson, and Scott, and Dickens, and Thackeray, because Fielding and Smollett, Eugene Sue and Dumas have often abused their great powers. The best things are most open to abuse; and dramatic literature, you will confess, has not been oftener or worse perverted and depraved than religious literature. Indeed, the Church seized on the drama when she was most busy in manipulating the human mind into superstition, and perpetrated greater blasphemies and obscenities in the so-called Mysteries, written and acted in the Middle Ages, than the dramatic writers of England or France have ever feisted into their most abominable plays. The drama is a kind of literature whose permanency is guaranteed by the constitution of man. Beginning with the very origin of literature, and continuing thus far on its history with every promise of ending only with its life—we must expect it to reflect and share the fortunes of humanity and to find itself, now in the hands of ennobled, and now of desecrated genuis; here the instrument of the unscrupulous, there the vehicle of truth, henor and inspiration. But how many dissolute and depraving drainatists and dramas would not the judicious and the conscientious consent to bear with, and guard ogainst, sooner than lose Shakespeare alone out of the world? The mischievous jack-o-lanterns and false lights of land and sea may shine on forever, if we can only extinguish them by blowing out the stars and quenching the sun. We cannot obliterate Washington to wipe Arnold out of American history, though treachery hung by his skirts alone to the fortunes of the race. We must let the tares grow to the harvest for the race. we can only extinguish them by blowing out the stars and quenching the sun. We cannot obliterate Washington to wipe Arnold out of American history, though treachery hung by his skirts alone to the fortunes of the race. We must let the tares grow to the harvest for the sake of the wheat. The drama stands in its own right, and in the right of its great pricets, the wonderful interpreters of humanity and great recreators of the race; and all the apostates and criminals who have desecrated its pure and beautiful shrine cannot make its nature otherwise than lawful and honorable and entilled to the protection of universal reason and justice. It is indeed deplorable that the written drama should have ever thrown its fascination around vice and crime, as it is always terrible when genius and wit, when art and skill, enter the service of the devil. Most sad it is that pleasure should ever be associated with folly, or amusement extracted from sin. But literature is not responsible for the abuses to which levity and immorality turn any of its powers; and it is not the drama, but the public and the dramatic authors who are to be censured for the production and encouragement of lax, immoral and corrupting plays. On this point I shall speak more fully and to better advantage at another period of this address.

And now, if, whatever the theory may be, the drama itself has been practically degraded and abused as a species of popular literature, until sober and discreet people, as a class, heave thoughtit wise and necessary to discountenance the reading of plays—how much ought the theater, the acted drama, to be discountenance and how little what is said in defense of the ideal stage applies to the real one? For what has the theater not been during its modern existence, if the allegations and accusations of the religious class, uttered in a thousand tones, are to be taken without abatement! Has it not been as much the focus of vice as the centrousness found a congenial home within its walls? Have not the extravagant fashion, th

decency—whose Bible was Shakespeare—whose table of commandments the rules of the green-room—their udgment-seat, the public—their best heaven, the appiause of the boxes—their only hell, the condemnation of the pit! Have not the young commenced their career of disobedience in stealing off to the play-house; and heavious the rooting and passionate recornes—its and have not its exciting and passionate scenes—its and have not its exciting and passionate scense—its glittering audience and bewitching actors—its ready bar-room, and as ready courtesans, softened and betrayed their feeble virtue, and finished in positive vice what began in youthful felly? Have not indecent exposure, obseenty or profanity of wit, innuendo and levity, characterized the stage? Has not the theater been the haunt of gamblers, jockeys, men of pleasure, women of the world—of all the light and careless portion of the community, and is it not essentially so now? Moreover, have not highly immoral plays—in which successful villainy or roguery has been applauded—the fents of some Jack Sheppard or Paul Chiford romantically held up to the admiration or imitation of youth; the betrayal of fenule virtue excused; the authority of wise parents made contemptible; the rules of morality held up to ridicule, and the habits of piety satirized and scorned? Have not the serious friends of order, purity, industry and religion, felt the theater to be the very essence of worldiness, wickedness, temptation and sin—an institution to be excluded to the latest moment from every well-governed community—to be avoided by all sober and public-spirited citizens, and placed under the special ban of formal religion, as the devil's own domain, the very gate of hell?

Now, I have a profound though a cautious respect

devil's own domain, the very gate of hell?

Now, I have a profound though a cautious respect for general impressions, and particularly for the instincts of the religious community, and from all I have read, or learned by direct observation or special inquiry. I believe that the ordinary verdict of scrious minds, and of the pulpit, respecting the theater, has many painful elements of truth in it. But I believe equally that it exhibits much extravagance, confusion and illogical reasoning. More particularly, I complain that this verdict leaves entirely out of view the uses of the theater, considering only its abuses; that it takes no pains to recognize what is good, in its eagerness to point out what is evil—or to discriminate between what is essential and what is accidental in this institution; that it coniousis the evils around, with the evils within the theater, and, to come directly to the point, fails to inquire and explain why, and by whose fault, and in accordance with what law, it is, that the immorality and recklessness of society, its folly and vice, have clustered about the theater. I do not deay the fact; but I deny the totally condemnatory inferences drawn from the fact. For in truth, the theater is the very place where, for no fault inherent in itself, the precusting follies and vices of society will necessarily become apparent. We do not expect to find the follies and vice of society, the levity and care, any more than we expect to find flies settling on rhubarb and aloes, and not on molasses and honey. But it would be quite as reasonable to give up peasure, because fools and knaves, the light and the wicked, make it their chief food. Because folly spends his whele time in laughter, sobriety does not propose to disase the risible muscles; because drunkenness ruins thousands, and gluttony tens of thousands, virtuous society does not expect to give up eating and drinking.

One very large class of the perils of humanity is in evitably and indiscolubly associated with its pleasure loving prepensities. I Now, I have a prefound though a cautious respec

to full conscience to sleep, and throw humanity off its attitude of resistance. This is not its weakness, but its estrength; its use and charm come of its carelessness and abandon. If it did not do this, it would not be the recreation of society. It men were thinking of their duty, or their business, self-discipline, of judgment to come, of secious and solemn concerns in their anusements, they would straightway become no longer ammsements, but trying occupations. It is, of course, then, of the very nature of pleasure, to expose and try the character; the powers of resistance are relaxed; the mind and heart are left to the impressions of the time and scene. Just here, then, is the place where the positive, tangible vices of society must appear, or rather, one great class of them—those that affect the senses. But this by no means settles the character of pleasure, any more than it settles the character of the gustatory nerve, that if it did not give us pleasure to eat, there would be no gluttony; to drink, no intemperance! The pleasure of eating and drinking is a universal and positive blessing, and

not to be ascribed solely, with some militaries philosophera, to the accessity of supplying men with a motive for labor, but to the Creator's benevoient decire to communicate happiness. If the love of pleasure, dangerous as it is, were taken from humanity, it pleasure intelf were destroyed, consequences would ensue varily more demorabling and fatal than any now proceeding from it is abuse! And when we are dwelling exclusively upon the evils of pleasure in any of its forms, it would cerrect some of our extravagance to step and meditate a while upon its origin, its uses, and its necessity.

The attractiveness of the theater, even to vice and folly, is nothing against it, until it can be proved that they are attracted there by what is bad and depraving. It is not enough to show that they carry there what is bad and depraving, or that they are not kept away by what is bad and depraving there, but that they are attracted by what is bad and depraving. I suppose them to be attracted precisely by what would attract me or you, or any innocent er well-intentioned person—by the love of pleasure, spectacle, society, inlent, beauty, light, architecture; and I suppose them to be very innecent, so far as the enjoyment of these things is concerned. That, knowing their presence, and coarseness or unscruptionsness, the stage should cater to it, is a monstrous evil; that folly and weakness should find those waiting for them there to practice on their propensities, that they should carry their vices and tastes to the theater with them, is a dreadful and undeniable misfortane to society. But I am yet to see how, because the wicked and the careless like what the good and the careful also like—namely, pleasure—it makes pleasure wrong; and how, because the theater, in its character of an amusement, attracts the vicious and depraved amusement. Have the vicious and depraved and the archites left! Are they not still men and women? Are not some of their doings and feelings such as the good and the innocent can share? For my own part, I be look at with any satisfaction; at the theater is, or has been, having nothing essentially wrong in its principle, and having proved itself to be, in fact, what in theory it has already shown itself to be, the most attractive and permanent of amusements, a fixed and indestructible fact, it seems to me that avowed moralists and Christian leaders and guides have committed a grave and hurtful error in their mode of dealing with it. They have made the drama and the stage and the stage and the stage are wearable for all the vices and follies which have

alists and Christian leaders and guides have committed a grave and hurtful error in their mode of dealing
with it. They have made the drama and the stage
answerable for all the vices and follies which have
gathered round them—a course as unjust as to make
the market responsible for the degs and rats, the
thleves and knaves, sure to find a harvest in that most
frequented and necessary place.

I know it will be replied, that patience with evils
connected with what is necessary, does not justify
patience with evils associated with what is net necessary; that because commerce makes a dangerous life
for sailors, we are not to place the dangerous life
for sailors, we are not to place the dangerous life
for sailors, we are not to place the dangerous life
for sailors, we are not to place the dangerous life
for sailors, we are not to place the dangerous life
for sailors, we are not to place the dangerous life
for sailors, we are not to place
and the vices and follies of
trade, of religion, of domestic life, all of which are
cardinal and necessary and natural interests of humanity, do not stand at all upon the same ground of
absolute discountenance which the vices and follies of
an artificial, unproductive and unnecessary annusement occupy. But there are various forms of necessity, and I am not sure that the necessity as that of
being fed and warmed. It is not necessary in the same
sense, and yet it may be equally a necessity. We do
not commonly place leisure, laughter, love, among the
necessaries of life, alongside of bread and water, fire
and shelter. Yet in a broad view of social interests
and human requirements, they would be found to rank
with them, not in the same class, but under the same
name of actual necessaries of a true, healthful and
vigorous social life. That may well be said to be
necessary, which, age after age, and in precise proportion to the influence of civilization and even of
Christianity, is found supported and sustained in the
very face of the church, and under the formal ban of
religi

metropolitan interest is too serious an element in our whole civic character and human prospects, to make me willing to ignore it; or, the hope of crushing it being preposterous, to allow me to sit easy while it remains hostile to morality, or in open competition with religion. I must, for my peace sake, see what of good it is that gives life to this sturdy tree, which has been so long stricken with the lightnings of the church and still survivee in greenness. I must do what I can to direct the efforts of piety and morality against what is vulnerable in the theater, that their arrows may no longer be wasted upon its adamantine portions. I must strive to obtain a truce between the theater and the church, the dramatic world and the religious world, long enough for candid consideration of their mutual causes of jealousy and suspicion, their seated opposition and allectation; and endeavor, after all our efforts to crush the theater have failed, to get the public and the dramatic profession to unite with the moral and serious portions of the community, or, what is more difficult, the moral and serious portions with them, to reform the theater; to reduce it to its theoretic, innocent and beneficent office; to make it a legitimate incent and beneficent office; to make it a legitimate in-terest and honest charm of society, under the smile of virtue and the protection of religion.

You will not suppose me ignorant of the alarm or misgiving with which such a hope and effort are sure to be received by the class with whom I am arguing. They will say, that instead of reforming the theater, we shall deform the church; that religion loses its They will say, that instead of reforming the theater, we shall deform the church; that religion loses its power over men the moment it shows any sympathy with their self-indulgent tastes, and that an absolute distruct and discountenance of the theater, a complete and thorough separation from it, as from plague and pollution, is the only way to escape its permicious influence. This, I am aware, is the almost universal method of dealing with the subject among serious persons, and it is because I distrust the general principle which keeps the world and the church at arms' length, that I am emboldened to oppose it in the strongest and most marked form which this opposition or distinction has ever taken. I speak as a friend and humble disciple of the church; a full believer in historical, organized Christianity, a sorrowful observer of the decline of worship, of faith and of reverence in our American society. But I think the weakness of the church as an institution mainly due in our day to its neglect to claim the world as its charge, and to assume its superintendence. I utterly repudiate "the touch not, taste not, handle not" principle, as unsound in theory, and impotent in practice. In proportion as the church has shut itself up in its own peculiar life and sanctity, it has created vices in itself and allowed them in the world; in preportion as the world has excluded, benished or lost the church from its pleasures and its companionship, it has degenerated in virtue and encourse of the feature in the coverage of the feature in t companionship, it has degenerated in virtue and en-couraged the fanaticism and dogmatism of a religious

class.

Religion is the salt of the world—not to be hoarded in hard and polished crystals, as in its original islands, glittering upon the distant view of passing navigators, but rather to be gathered, and ground, and mired with the daily food of society, giving purity and flavor to all we feed upon. Christianity is the leaven of the world, inedible in the lump and useless in separation, but, mixed with the substance of practical life, lending wholesomeners, gusto and nutritiveness to what would otherwise be crude, heavy and hartful. Who shall teach, who perform this, if not the church? Christ kept the company of publicans and sinners, and was called "a men gluttonous and a wine bibber;" and the church has only cultivated self-righteousness, fanaticism and false fervor in itself, and a more unbridled vice, levity and crime in the world, when it has understood its duty so little as to draw a visible line between the church and the world—establish different standards of morality for those inside and those outside of its pale; abandoning social life and public annusement, and what is most universally attraorive and dangerous, to the unaided charge of the world, and intrenching itself in a monotonous, unlovely and selfish seclusion of its own.

To this policy must we ascribe its obvious loss of power in the world. Much of the genius, taste, literature, poetry, art of society, are already out and fast going out of the church; and philosophy, social and natural science, are now, to an alarming extent, in open or secret alleuation from it. But, thank God, the world is gaining much that the church is losing; for he precepts and spirit of Christ, separated from eccleass. Religion is the salt of the world—not to be hourded

sistered and degreetic deformities are, micr wilfproving and self-recommending form creeping into
the enatures, affections, and policies of the world at
large. If the visible church and the clergy would not
see themselves left like the pyramide in the desert,
measurements of a vast population and a vast dominion
that once surrounded them, but now out of the hisof the commerce, the uses and the interests of the
world, the rigantic tombs of forgotten kings and
prierts, it becomes them to take their invited place at
the head of the real concerns of society, advising partners in the business and the pleasures of the world;
guides, friends, sympathizers and helpers of the race,
in all its efforts to instruct, amuse and save itself. I
am a servant not merely of religion, but of the church,
and hope to live and die in this service; but if there is
to be a great gulf fixed between the church and the
world, as between heaven and hell, minister of Christ
as I am, I would sooner take my place and part with
the world than with the church; with common humanity than any elect portion of it; with confessed sinners
than self-ass anned saints—for I believe that Christ,
who is the light of the world and not of the church

who is the light of the world and not of the church alone, is more permanently a resident with the common heart and fortunes and feelings of mankind at large, than of any fraction of humanity, however select, or self-appropriative of his name and patronage. If, then, the theater were as bad as the place from which the haples, erring women came, who play such an effective part in our Savior's ministry—and it often has that special claim on our mingled pity and help—I should not account it Christian to abandon the stage to itself, or to permit any self-saving scruples to make it itself, or to permit any self-saving scrupies to make it an interest of society which Christians are not bound to scrutinize and oversee. I desire to speak with forbearance of the mistakes and prejudices of the piousfor I know how honest and real many of them are. But I must be faithful to my own light and to the race. Those who, under that strange but utter blindness as to their own frame of mind, to which truly good men are liable, are willing to separate themselves from the fortunes of their race; to save their own souls without much diminution of their joy that millions of their fellow-creatures are losing theirs; to regard the ordinary and common life of the world as profane, and not under the blessing of God, or the grace of our Lord and Savior, may consistently join in denunciation of amusements in general, and the theater is particular. But as, by God's grace, I belong not to this body, and share none of its partial views or exclusive hopes and prospects, I depart in no degree from my principles as a minister of Christ, or a teacher of morals and religion, in including the theory and the practice of amusements, in the scheme of my pulpit instructions and my social responsibilities, or in countenancing the principle, and so har as examination may justify it, the institution of the theater.

Assuming then that the theater is a great and im-

principle, and so far as examination may be institution of the theater.

Assuming, then, that the theater is a great and important fact, an institution so vital and popular, that even the serious evils connected with it, cannot crush it; assuming it as already proved that its foundations lie deep in the wants of human nature and municipal society; assuming that the course hitherto pursued by the details of morality in relie deep in the wants of human nature and municipal society; assuming that the course hitherto pursued by the church and the organized friends of morality in regard to it, has had little good effect, I would now in quire what course duty, policy and piety prescribe in regard to the theater. To answer this question, we must recall and classify the evils already referred to, which good citizens and Christians deplore, and then ask ourselves, in view of the considerations already produced, how they arise, and how they may be abated. These evils fall under four heads:

1. The identification of the theater with frivolity, worldliness, moral indifference, and spiritual apathy, and its general tendency to reproduce them.

2. Its direct or covert association with, and encouragement of, intemperance and licentiousness.

and its general tendency to reproduce them.

2. Its direct or covert association with, and encouragement of, intemperance and licentiousness.

3. The immorality of plays, either in their general spirit and drift, or in their details, with the use of manners, costumes, language, insinuation, intentionally shocking to modesty, and destructive of reverence.

4. The bad effect of theatrical life upon actors and actresses—in a word, the unworthy personal character of the dramatic profession.

These evils, as we have seen, have been immense and are still confessedly great. They have some of them been much greater than they are, and little thanks are due to the Church, or the custodians of public morals, that they have been reduced. The first is, perhaps, nearly as great as ever; the second has decidedly lessened; the third has recently increased; the fourth is hopefully diminished. From what do these evils mainly arise? Who is responsible for them, and who can abate them?

I believe from ray very soul—and to what other conclusion has the whole evidence tended?—that the Church and the se-called gravity and moral worth of society are really, though indirectly and unintentionally, the authors and propagators of the malignant disorders and perilous influences of the theater, leaving both the dramatic profession and the public at large comparatively blameless, and answerable only for its more venial sins.

The Catholic Church in mediaval times, in the

ing both the dramatic profession and the public and large comperatively blameless, and answerable only for its more venial sins.

The Catholic Church in mediaval times, in the prosecution of its selfish designs to control the human mind, had resuscitated the heathen drama—which in former ages had refined and elevated the morals of Greece and Rome—in the shape of its own odious mysteries and moralities. The inherent instincts of human nature, speedily reverted to the ancient standard, and gave birth to secular performances, more genially and truly depicting the hopes and passions of our race. Jealous of such a rival, its competitor both in revenue and popular influence, it forthwith excommunicated actors, and denied them Christian burial. Thus commenced that wicked, selfish, and narrow policy, which, adopted and refinforced by Puritan prejudices, was continued and strengthened by the Protestant Church, and now so largely possesses the serious class, that the theater, the most popular and inevitable of public amusements, has been mainly abandoned to the unblessed and reckless care of those willing to defy both Church and morality? What is to be expected of a community from which good memore taught to fee—of an institution avowedly made over to the Devil and his children? What could the theabe expected of a community from which good heat are taught to fee—of an institution avowedly made over to the Devil and his children? What could the theater be expected to become—in itself, its influence, its actors—under such a curse, but barren of figs, and prolific only in thorns and briars?

In soher truth, it redounds to the credit of human nature, and to the essential purity of art, to the wholesceneses of public amusements, and the self-elevating character of the theater, that under this terrible reputation and moral colling—descrition by the good, and

character of the theater, that under this terrible repu-tation and moral eclipse—desertion by the good, and cherishing by the evil—the drama has maintained a decency, exerted an influence, and produced a class not indicatable by the ordinary standards of society, but only by the special class who seek to maintain a dogmatic standard. The vices of the theater have mai-formly hear these of the formly been those of the time—no more, no worse. The theater has had no serious vices of its own, like trade, with its fraud and perjury; like the church, with its hypocrisy and arrogance. The mirror of bad The theater has had no serious vices of its own, like the church, with its fraud and perjury; like the church, with its hypocrisy and arrogance. The mirror of bad times, it has reflected the vices that passed before it, not those it originated. Drunkenness has carried its victims, and licentiousness its votaries, into its precincts. Profanity and coarseness from the pit and boree have required profanity and coarseness from the stage, while vulgarity and ignorance have demanded rant and fustian. What is the theater, that we should expect it to be wise, and moral, and pure, and reverential, to an andience that, by the theory of the class I address, cares little for these qualities, and when it has no character to lose by any pandering it may practice to the degraded tastes of the rabble or the reckless! Were the church itself frequented only by the ignorant and the wicked, how long do you imagine the pastors would be pure and the doctrine sound! No interest, no class, can bear the withdrawal of the virtuous portion of society. The theater has borne it quite as well as the church would, as the state of religion in Mexico or in France, or even in portions of

virtious portion of society. The theater has borne it quite as well as the church would, as the state of religion in Mexico or in France, or even in portions of Protestant Germany might testify.

The levity, excess, association with vice, and general lack of moderation in the theater; its opposition to, or defiance of religion; its lax morals and bad taste, be they more or less, are due, maisly, in my judgment, to the unhappy separation between the church and the world—the guidee and examples in morals and virtue, and the public at large; and to the special emphasis which this separation has had in the case of the theater. What are we to look for, in general, when the young and the old no longer mingle in the same society, when the grave and the gay keep themselves systematically apart; and society is divided into those who partake and enjoy amusement, and those who abstain from and deery it? Will it not necessarily occur that one class will ruin itself by excess in pleasures, while the other is seriously injured and narrowed by the lack of them? Is it not clear, in American society, that the gay are too gay; the grave cess in pleasures, while the other is seriously injured and narrowed by the lack of them? Is it not clear, in American society, that the gay are too gay; the grave too grave; the young too flighty; the old too sad; that places of public amusement are too exclusively, and to the great injury of their habitual frequenters, attended by a special class, when the intermingling of the class who new utterly shun them, would at once act with a twofold charm—namely, to make general society, home, and intercourse with the sober, less, uninteresting and repulsive, and the places of amusement not so exclusively attractive, by being adapted to higher, purer and less superficial tastes? In addition to its other offices, the theater is now a sort of blind protest against the sad seriousness of trade and the hard gravity of piety. It says, "there is some "fun, frolic, nonsense, beauty, leisure still left in the world." When domestic life and religious life shall both learn how to invest themselves with the charms of sit, and the mild and pleasing graces of sympathy, we may anticipate some diminution of the excessive taste which the young people of our day have for the theater. But until the more sober citizens, and our religious people allew themselves some generous participation in the pleasures and amusements of the world, they will-either know what art is, nor what its powers and fascinations are. Brought up on a hard diet of duty, they have learned to five in a corner of their wide and complex nature, and cannot understand this outbreak of their children into the fields of romane, passion and esthetics. It is an insurrection of nature for her rights, and an insurrection which will ripen learned to the rights, and an insurrection of maters for her rights, and an insurrection of meters of the state of the rights, and an insurrection of the while ripen learned to five in a corner of their wild and only the rights.

passion and asthetics. It is an insurrection of nature for her rights, and an insurrection which will ripen

into a revolution. It becomes us by timely concession to see that consething better than analysis. I charge, then, the vices and follow of the thanks as of our other amusements, and of our great ciety, to the withdrawal, the self-separation, of the moral and religious portion of the community exists, from the pleasure-leving resorts of the people. I believe that all the specified classes of evil to acted with the theater would disappear to as great as extent as they ever disappear, even in respectable society, if, after having recognized the essential isocency and necessity of public amusement in general, and of the stage in particular, the sober and virtues people of this and every city would go in moderation to the theaters. This would at once take the ban off this diversion as a thing essentially and hopelessly wrong—an enormous injury to actor, and also to the public, whom it drives to their pleasures in defiance of what they themselves suppose to be right. Next, in their presence there would be the only possible and effective censorship in a country like ours, securing the selection of plays of a harmless and spottless character, and their performance in a manner decorous and unblamable. Further, the same influence would exclude—for it has partially done it already—drinking-places and improper characters, as such, from the play-house; and, finally, their countenance, requirement and support would give actom and actresses the strength and courage they so much need to rise above the perils of their laborious and exciting vocation, and to take their place with other respected and respectable callings, upon the common platform of moral and Christian amenableness.

These suggestions are not speculations. They are based upon what is already begun, and now going on. The existence of a place like Niblo's Garde—and honorable mention should never fail to be made of that pioneer in the atrical reform in this community, William Niblo—which sober people of the less upitulianed religious sects could attend without about

where a good orchestra exists, comparatively few cave their scats between the acts for any other refreehment.

Is it not patent, too, that every theater purifies it self to meet the precise taste for purity which it discovers in its patrons? As I learn from others—for I have very small personal experience—you might graduate the approaches to absolute spoilesances of words and motions—from a very remote, to a quis satisfactory, or at any rate, encouraging nearness to the standard of true morality, by observing the character and class of the audiences who support the various theaters of New-York. I am assured by Chastian gentlemen of Boston, that the principal theater in that city is as free from a reproach of inpunity or irreverence, as the ordinary circle of good so exty. And what but the partial relaxation of the code which has excluded moral worth and sobriety from the theater, has effected this partial reform? Does not progress it only in this direction? And it is because of the abundant proof from all quarters that progress is making, that I have been encouraged and compelled to become a laborer in this field. But even now, it impossible to read the accounts of the stage, the play of the plays, without perceiving how urgently the flaster stands in need of a graver sensorship—of the far and of the support of a wiser, more thoughtul and more solid portion of the people. I do not support, even now, that the theater, in the character of its plays, is at all worse than much of the literature which finds its way, unreproved, into our parlors and bedrooms and we may thank the indulgence of a tickly appetite for French novels, for the popularity of the prurient, morbid and undermaining dranue of the French school, which, because it is decent in conception and debauching in its main drift. It needs a Christian intelligence, a cure, firm, moral instinct, to recognize and fity characterize much of the insidions poison and fascinating corruption of the stage. But I truly believe that dozen sen of unquestioned purpose a

Let great works, sterling comedy or solemn tragedy bold the stage, and the deeper emotions, satisfied to the full, would not covet this tickling of the sentimental nature, which makes one bad play only create a morbid appetite for another; and which carries so many to most harmful excess. On every account, then, the monitors and guides of the people should share their amusements, when not sinful in themselves. Their vices they may not share nor partake—their tastes and pleasures they may and ought. You need not tell me that the silent remonstrance, the settled reproof which the absence of the religious class from its scene gives to the levity and immorably of the theater, are its most effectual and only Christian cheeks. I reply that these have proved utterly ineffectual, any, have reacted upon the church and public morals—that the theater is none the better for this frown, and the church much the worse. It affects only the face that wears it. Besides, positive influence is a thousand times more powerful than negative. One good man, going to the theater, does it more good than a hundred good men who stay away can do it. I believe it is Mrs. Mowatt who states in her Recollections of the Stage, that she has known the sudden discovery by the management, of the presence of a single person of eminent and virtuous character in the andience, chasten and qualify the whole performance; silencing ribaldry, repressing inuendo, and putting the whole company on their good behavior: and the management of theaters in New-York directly confirm the fact, as proved by their own experience. What might not the expected and certain proseque of a single person of theaters in New-York directly confirm the fact, as proved by their own experience. What might not the expected and certain proseque of the anametic profession itself, which was, in my original intention, the main purpose of this address. You will excuse me, ladies and gentlemen of the theater on the dramatic profession itself, which was, in my original intention, the main p

your heads to the religious community, but it has really been in your behalf and service; and I premise to confine myself wholly in what remains, to your immediate case.

It is unquestionably true, that the exclusion of the theater from the sympathies of a large and commanding portion of society, reprobating it as immoral and dangerous, has exerted a most unhappy and injurious influence upon the dramatic profession. Make any calling disreputable—pronounce and maintain it lobe, under ordinary circumstances, a disqualification for general society—hold it in constant and steady association with all the vices of the senses—and you have done all you can to degrade its tone, and to render it really dangerous and worthy of suspicion. If all surgeous were still compelled to be barbers, and were held in the repute of barbers, you can see what the probable state of that profession would be. Were the English clergy of the lower grades still everywhere put below the salt, and ranked among the upper servants of great houses, as Macaulay shows as they were even in the time of James II., they would continue the service and sensual body they then were. Were butchers still made incapable of serving on luries, when life was at stake, because of the alleged cruelty of their trade and nature, they would probably justify their reputation for ferocity, were it only in scorn of the silly injustice of the law. While other professions or callings once and long regarded with suspicion, have risen above public odium, youns, members of the dramatic profession, has suffered the most obstinate and cruel reprobation. Almost every inducement, which society could offer, to lead discreet, orderly, and virtuous lives, has been taken away from players. Not only the religious, but the irreligious word, have held them to be a class of persona who, to have adopted their calling, must be lost to self-respect, and to pursue it, must abandon all pretentions to virtue. Outcasts from the clurch, social parishs, the very Jews and gypsies of Christian civi